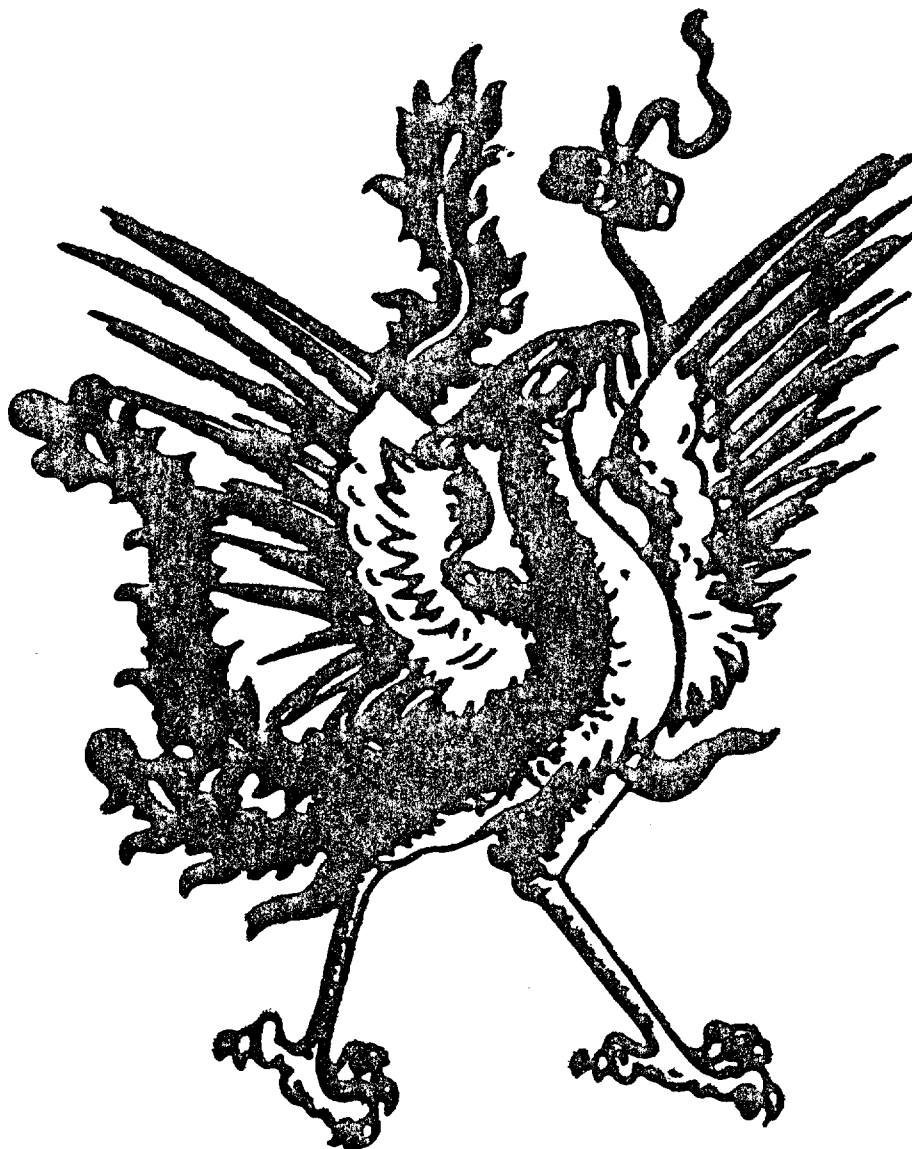


COUNTER-SPY

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ON THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

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Phung - Hoàng

Counter-Spy is the official bulletin of the Committee for Action/Research on the Intelligence Community (CARIC) and is a collective effort of the Committee. Each issue will present information and analysis on different aspects of the U.S. Intelligence effort. None of the information presented, no matter how embarrassing to the U.S. government, will pose a threat to national security. It has been estimated by a Congressional committee that 90% of government information now classified should not be classified at all. Our information comes from publically available sources. We welcome comments and suggestions from our readers and supporters, and encourage anyone interested in doing similar work to contact us.

In this issue, CARIC takes a critical look at the current F-6 program, as conducted in Vietnam. F-6 is the new title for the old "Operation Phoenix" assassination program, originally designed to neutralize the infrastructure of the National Liberation Front. The new title has not meant the abandoning of old ways however, the U.S. government still supports this "intelligence program" based on indiscriminate arrest, torture, and murder.

We would like to thank the Indochina Resource Center for their assistance in this issue of Counter-Spy. We would also like to thank all of you who took the time to write us about our first issue of Counter-Spy, and we hope that even more people can take the time give us their thoughts on this issue.

Responsible for this issue: Tim Butz, Bart Osborn, Winslow Peck.

This is the last issue of Counter-Spy that we will be able to mail to those who have not subscribed. Those who would like to continue to receive Counter-Spy on a monthly basis can subscribe for one year by using the coupon in this issue.

COVER: The Phoenix or Phung Hoang Program was named after the all-seeing mythical bird which selectively snatches its prey--but the techniques of this operation are anything but selective. For many Vietnamese, the Phung Hoang Program or as it is now known as the F-6 program is a constant menace to their lives. "The Phoenix is a bird of death."

COUNTER-SPY, the official bulletin of the Committee for Action/Research on the intelligence Community (CARIC), is a monthly publication with this issue. Subscriptions are \$6.00 per year for individuals, \$10.00 for institutions, and \$75.00 for government agencies. Individuals may become CARIC sponsors by donating \$15.00 or more, which includes a free subscription to Counter-Spy and allows us to continue our work. Prisoners and GI's may receive free copies. Address all correspondence to CARIC, PO Box 647, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, D.C. 20044. Copyright 1973 by CARIC.

Don't Read This Out Loud!

The headlines in American newspapers have for years told of Army surveillance of civilians, U.S. spy planes being shot down over other countries, attempted coups and intrigue initiated by the CIA, and unrestrained FBI wiretapping. We all know that Big Brother is watching, but no one in our government has taken the time to explain who is being spied upon, and why we are being watched. Too often, we American citizens don't even know who Big Brother is.

In 1955, President Eisenhower accepted the report of the Hoover Commission on U.S. Intelligence. Among other recommendations, the Commission emphasized the need for two "watchdog" committees on intelligence within the executive and legislative branches of government. Although a Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board was established to serve the President, Congress by a overwhelming majority has refused to establish a committee within the legislative branch. With Congress abrogating its responsibilities, there is no agency of government directly responsible to the public monitoring U.S. intelligence.

Now former intelligence workers, Viet Nam Veterans, and concerned citizens have formed the Committee for Action/Research on the Intelligence Community (CARIC), to serve as an independent "watchdog" on the government spy apparatus. We have formed the committee to provide the vital information an aware public needs to know about government operations. The secrecy with which the government surrounds itself must stop.

CARIC will serve as an independent publicly sponsored source of analysis and information on the practices, organization, and objectives of U.S. Intelligence. What clandestine actions are being carried out in the name of America? Is the CIA preparing to entangle us in another war similar to Indochina? What information is going into federal data banks on innocent American citizens? Did the White House direct the Watergate bugging caper? Is the FBI becoming a "secret police force" responsive only to the Republican Party? Whose phones are tapped in America? These are some of the questions CARIC hopes to answer.

Although CARIC does believe that a massive government spy apparatus is at work in the world, we hope to dispel some of the paranoia citizens naturally feel when there is talk of spies and wiretaps. We know that the FBI does not have agents behind every tree, but there are agents in every major town in this country who have spied on innocent private and public citizens. Only a full and undisguised look at this hidden world can displace unwarranted fears, and guide the public effort to end this illegal and unjustified espionage.

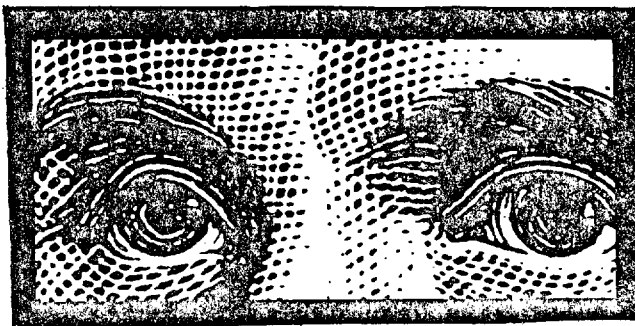
CARIC knows that tens of thousands of American citizens from all walks of life were mobilized over the past decade to help bring an end to the government's war in Indochina, a war that has taken new forms under the direction of U.S. intelligence agencies. CARIC hopes that these same concerned citizens will continue to oppose the government's policies and bring an end to this new form of covert war. It is now time for thousands of Americans to mobilize to stop the spying as we stopped the dying. We encourage everyone to join us in our effort.

Thank you,
CARIC

CARIC PO Box 647
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- Enclosed is my contribution of \$15.00 to help sustain CARIC's work. (Please send my free subscription to "Counter-Spy.")
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PACIFICATION:

THE 100 YEAR FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

WHAT IS PACIFICATION?

There have always been two wars in Indochina. The obvious one of bullets flying, bombs dropping, babies screaming and people dying has been paralleled by another war which has been just as important to the designers of the fighting war and in the end has had the same terrifying results. This other war is pacification. Pacification in Vietnam has been a military, political, and economic process of establishing and maintaining control over the Vietnamese people.

General William C. Westmorland defined pacification in these terms:

"Pacification is the very difficult process of establishing or reestablishing effective local self government within the political framework of the legitimate central government and its constitution."

From the beginning of America's involvement in Vietnam, pacification experts had noted the revolutionary axiom that for the revolution to succeed the revolutionary force must move among the people like the "fish in the sea." Thus, reasoned the pacification experts, the best strategy for defeating the insurgent force would be to deny the "fish" access to the "sea".

With this thought in mind, the United States Mission to Vietnam and the Government of Vietnam (GVN) in Saigon conducted various pacification efforts all designed to deny the Viet Cong or National Liberation Front (NLF) access to the people. These pacification programs were euphemistically termed "Winning Hearts and Minds" or WHAM. Each of the pacification efforts failed precisely because the Vietnamese people chose to be "liberated" by other Vietnamese people in the NLF rather than be "WHAM'd" by American forces.

Although rivalries among the Americans, corruption in the GVN, and bureaucratic instability in a time of war aided the failure of pacification, the root cause of each failure lies in the objective situation of American influence in Vietnam attempting to deny self-determination to the Vietnamese. In this situation the only logical result of WHAM was not a peaceful, pacified, non-communist Vietnam but

the Phoenix assassination program.

Pacification has two objectives. The first is enlisting the aid of the people in the government programs because they believe the government serves their best interests (WHAM). The second and equally important objective is to secure the overt rejection of the theories and practices of the NLF. The steps to achieving these two goals are:

Occupation of a populated area - The GVN had to gain military supremacy in the area to be pacified. Under the various pacification programs devised over the years, the Saigon government often "bit off more than it could chew," attempting to occupy areas far from the lines of supply, support and reinforcement.

Organize the people - Political stability had to be maintained if pacification was to be achieved. Law and order were the goals of the pacification effort with little regard to self-determination. The tactics of achieving this goal were most often intimidation and bribery. As John Paul Vann, a pacification expert for many years, said, "... the majority of the people are apathetic and responsive only to force. To organize this segment of the population requires force. The people cannot be left to choose... The nature of this war is such that the people must be on one side or the other."

Elimination of the political opposition - Concurrently with the organization of the population, the Saigon government, with US assistance, set about identifying and neutralizing the political apparatus of all opposition forces including the NLF, the various non-communist nationalist forces, the religious groups and the students. This has been accomplished through massive imprisonment and assassination. Today more than 200,000 men, women and children, all political prisoners, languish in GVN prisons. The number of those assassinated by the agents of the GVN will probably never be known but 47,000 were known to be slain by 1971.

Stabilization - If and when the combined effort of organizing the people and eliminating the political opposition have been obtained, the government then goes about maintaining political supremacy through the holding of local elections in the village or hamlet. The presence

of armed occupation forces in the area for an indefinite period after the formation of a local government insures the continuation of the pacification process. After a time the occupying forces are converted into police or security forces. The pacified area is then used as a "base" to move into other areas for pacification.

In reality, the GVN under US guidance has never been able to achieve ultimate pacification and today only controls a few large cities, some coastal areas and a few base camps in the interior. The rest of the countryside is under the authority of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) established by the NLF and the GVN is losing more and more pacified areas every day.

The ultimate outcome of the conflict will be the political supremacy in south Vietnam of the NLF/PRG because the pacification effort has been doomed to failure from the inherent contradiction of the American involvement - trying to make peace by waging war (WHAM). The GVN and the US government have tried for many years to prevent just this outcome of the conflict. After each pacification effort failed, the GVN and the US government escalated their tactics towards the inevitable point of mass murder. As an American infantry major once told American reporters, "We had to destroy the village in order to save it." It is probable with this thought pattern guiding the pacification effort that the presence of the US government in Vietnam has only strengthened the National Liberation Front.

EARLY APPROACHES TO PACIFICATION

The first attempts at pacification in Vietnam in modern times occurred during the Japanese occupation in WWII. The Japanese Army's secret police, the Kemp-eitai, created "neighborhood associations" to control populations in invaded areas. The Kempeitai ran the "neighborhood associations" as authoritarian extensions of the Japanese Imperial Army. Naturally this pacification effort only strengthened the determination of the Vietnamese nationalists, especially the Vietminh, to force the foreign occupiers out of Vietnam which they did with assistance from the forerunner of the US CIA, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

The French had first occupied Vietnam in 1884. They began an early pac-

ification attempt about this time, although the French Expeditionary Corps (FEC) of the French Union Forces (Foreign Legion) had complete authority for both civil and military affairs. French troops were deployed around key population and commercial centers with orders to "win the confidence of the local population." When security was restored, the French troops were shifted to the outer periphery of the pacification area and internal defense turned over to the Vietnamese *supplittiefs* who worked for the French. This basic strategy was not altered from 1885 until the Japanese occupancy.

After the defeat of the Japanese, the French reoccupied their old colonies in Indochina. However, the Vietnamese nationalists - the Vietminh later the NLF called Viet Cong in some American reports - were strong enough by this time to demand an independent Vietnam. During the French/Vietminh conflict, a number of special pacification areas were established by the French. Vietnamese loyal to the French, the *supplittiefs*, - many of whom are still in the Saigon government including Premier Thieu - protected the interior of each area, while French regulars operated outside as a mobile reserve against the Vietminh. Within the secure zone, the French organized Vietnamese cadres for civil development work. The cadres were called GAMO's (Groupes Administratives Mobile Organization) and were under French military authority. The French called their area technique the "Oil Spot", hoping that the pacified areas would grow outward, as does a spot of oil on water, from the base areas. This technique was later adopted by the US pacification effort.

The French failed in their pacification efforts because they refused to seek the support of the peasants. They then became tied down in fixed points along major supply routes where they were no match for the superior guerilla strategy of the Vietminh, who preferred to destroy the French power piecemeal while blocking their pacification effort. Eventually the French were tied down in a final fixed engagement at Dien Bien Phu and defeated. Following the French/Vietminh accords at the Geneva conference in 1954, the French retired to Saigon. The French maintained up to 80,000 troops in Vietnam up to 1956 and the GAMO's continued in some form until 1957.

NGO DINH DIEM AND EARLY PACIFICATION

After the Geneva Accords, the French supported Emperor of Vietnam Bao Dai appointed, at the insistence of the French, a well known non-communist nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem as prime minister with instructions to form a new government in Saigon as Ho Chi Minh and the Vietminh were doing in Hanoi. The early years of his regime were marked by intrigue from the French, the other nationalist forces and the United States. The US Government was paying up to 78% of the French military and pacification effort by this time and sent the senior American expert on pacification, Major General USAF (ret.) then Col. Edward Geary Lansdale, to Vietnam to advise the Diem government on pacification. The Mission Liaison Group (MLG) headed by Lansdale gained great influence over the Diem family and convinced Diem and his closest political advisor and brother Ngo Dien Ngu to unite the various nationalist forces in the south under his government. This upset the French who believed that the Americans were gaining more influence in Vietnam at the expense of French influence. The French then instigated a coup by the Binh Xuyen sect with the support of Bao Dai who was living in Paris. The Binh Xuyen were the Vietnamese version of Chicago gangsters who were given control of the Saigon police by the Emperor. This is roughly equivalent to Al Capone becoming Chicago's chief of police during the 1930's. Diem fought against this and on October 26, 1956 proclaimed the Republic of Vietnam in Saigon.

As the US Government gained more influence over the Diem regime and the GVN, pacification became a prime concern. Lansdale suggested a program which became known as Civic Action or "National Security Action", which was modeled after the attempts at pacification in the Philippines during the conflict between the Manila government of Ramon Magsaysay and the insurgent force of the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (People's Anti-Japanese Army) or "Huks." The attempts at pacification by the Manila government were also concieved by the US advisor Lansdale.

The programs, under the Diem government, consisted of rural development designed to lead "the inhabitants, treated as loyal subjects of a liberating regime...to chose

for themselves the regime which they will defend against any current sabotage or any future threat." The bulk of the pacification efforts during this period centered on the Catholic refugees who moved to the south from Hanoi as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was proclaimed by the Vietminh. This Catholic population formed an anti-communist element in the countryside that was loyal to Diem who was also Catholic. In 1956, many of these Vietnamese Catholics were forced by the Diem government to move from the coastal lowlands into the interior chiefly to the high plateau area. Diem, guided by US advisors, desired to place reliable groups in the strategically important areas of Vietnam which was essential to both the refugee resettlement program and pacification.

In the mean time, the US advisory effort had increased as the French lost more influence and eventually retired from Vietnam. Besides the MLG, the US government sent a group of scholars and experts to Vietnam as part of the Michigan State University, Vietnam Advisory Group (MSU/VAG) to devise a large scale rural resettlement plan for Vietnam. This was not to be the last time that US civilian experts would advise the Saigon government and the US Mission to Saigon on pacification. Many "think tank" groups, especially the RAND Corp. would become involved in pacification.

The first "think tank" approach to pacification, the MSU/VAG, developed an ambitious plan to construct "agrovilles" throughout the Mekong Delta. The agrovilles were designed to place the rural population along the major roads and arteries of communication to expedite the movement of security forces. The agrovilles would be protected with walls, moats and local security. A major emphasis of the Agrovillage Program was eliminating NLF recruitment, taxation, and information gathering. The NLF was a Vietnamese nationalist force - composed of Vietminh members who had stayed in their ancestral homes in the south, rather than go north to the DRV, and fresh recruits driven by the brutality of the Diem and French authority to join in the new effort for self-determination. The NLF was never completely dominated by the Vietnamese Communist Party, a point noted in some US intelligence re-

ports but ignored by a vast segment of the US press.

By 1959 only twenty-three agrovilles had been constructed when the program was abandoned by the Saigon government. The agrovilles had been operated by the GVN under several naive assumptions. First the GVN anticipated that the peasants would have a spontaneous enthusiasm for the program, their enthusiasm being sparked by bribes and rewards. This did not happen because the peasants would more often be beaten by the governments agents who kept the rewards for themselves.

The second naive assumption was the belief that competent cadres for administrative posts would emerge from the rural population. Instead, corruption became instilled in the GVN. For the most part the agrovillage effort tried to instill pacification by fear and terror. The NLF did the exact opposite and won the confidence of the rural population. As the NLF's strength in the countryside increased, Diem lost more and more control of the population and by 1961 the Agrovillage Program had failed.

STRATEGIC HAMLETS

To meet the increasing presence of the NLF, the Saigon government initiated the first of the truly massive pacification efforts - Ap Chien Luoc or Strategic Hamlets. The program was officially instituted in March, 1962 with both US Mission and Diem's brother Ngu being the chief proponents. The Saigon government created the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Strategic Hamlets which assumed all responsibility for the program.

The purpose of the program was to achieve the widest possible control over the population by the Saigon government. The immediate security objectives of the program were two-fold; first, to sever the communication and control lines of the NLF to the rural population and thus deny the "fish" from the "sea". Second, to promote a nation-wide self-defense effort. In addition to these immediate objectives, the Strategic Hamlet program was designed to have important implications for the long-range development of the GVN. It was hoped by Diem and his US advisors that the program would create a social, economic and political infrastructure in the countryside which would uproot the

ancestral ties of the peasants and thus their loyalty to the community-based NLF and implant a lasting political administration at the local level loyal to Saigon.

The hamlet is the smallest organized community in rural Vietnam. Several hamlets make up a village, however under the Strategic Hamlet program both hamlets and villages were fortified.

PARTIAL LIST OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR PACIFICATION/PHOENIX/F-6

ADVISORS/DESIGNERS

E.G. Lansdale, Major Gen., USAF(ret.)
Sir Robert G.K. Thompson
Dep. Amb. William J. Porter
Amb. Robert Komer
Amb. William E. Colby
Amb. Norman L. Sweat
FSR George D. Jacobson, SAAFFO

AMBASSADORS

Amb. Henry Cabot Lodge
Amb. Maxwell D. Taylor, Gen. ARMY(ret.)
Amb. Ellsworth Bunker
Amb. Graham Martin

COMUSMACV

Gen. William C. Westmoreland
Gen. Creighton W. Abrams
Gen. Fredrick Weyland

CIA Station Chiefs/CAS SAIGON

John Richardson
Peer De Silva
Mr. Jorganson
John Hart
Ted Shackley
Thomas Polgar

PRESIDENTS

Dwight David Eisenhower
John Fitzgerald Kennedy
Lyndon Baines Johnson
Richard Milhaus Nixon

The primary security force created in the Strategic Hamlet period of pacification was the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF). The largest component of the RVNAF, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was created at the end of the war by decree of Bao Dai, and many of the

original units can trace their history back to Vietnamese *supplittiefs* operating as part of the French Union forces. Under Diem many of the independent nationalist forces were also incorporated into the ARVN.

Another element of the RVNAF created about this time were the Regional Forces and Popular Forces (RF/PF). The Regional Forces were created from the old Guard Civile (CG) left over from the French occupation and would come under eventual control of the Province Chiefs who in most areas were officers in the ARVN. The Popular Forces were developed from the Self Defense Corps (SDC) created to protect the hamlets during the early years of the Diem regime and were primarily used in static defense near each platoon's home village. In practice, the RF/PF were deployed and led in local operations by the district chief who was an officer in the ARVN.

The Strategic Hamlet plan's major emphasis for reorganization, however, was the police. The plan called for increased use of National Police Forces which were being trained by the Saigon government from proposals of both the US Mission and the British Advisory Mission (BAM) headed by Robert GK Thompson, the former Secretary of Defense in Malaya. Although the several plans submitted by the US Mission differed somewhat from the Thompson plan, consensus was finally reached among the parties and the Strategic Hamlet program was formed. The differences among the US, British, and GVN would continue to disrupt the efficiency of the program and would aid in its eventual demise.

Until this time police efforts had been maintained in the rural areas by the old CG and SDC. In the cities, the Surete had been destroyed during the struggles between the Binh Xuyen sect and Diem with most of the competent detectives forming the new intelligence branch of RVNAF, the Military Security Service (MSS). The ARVN had by this time taken responsibility for policing Saigon and a few other cities.

Under the revised Thompson plan the National Police Force was created to play an important role in pacification. At approximately the same time in 1959, the US Mission began its Public Safety Program in Vietnam, incorporating earlier police advisory efforts of the MLG under Lansdale and the MSU/VAG. This program

would be operated by the United States Agency for International Development (AID), nominally operated by the US Department of State but under heavy influence by the US CIA. Another element of the US Mission also had control over AID efforts in the Public Safety Program - CAS SAIGON, the operational unit of the US CIA in Saigon operating under the light cover of Office of Special Assistant to the Ambassador (OSA). The field offices of CAS SAIGON sometimes operated under the light cover of Combined Studies Group (CSG) in the Provinces.

The initial phase of the Strategic Hamlet program called for moving the population into more central locations and constructing defenses around their hamlets. The initial stages of the program appeared to have been successful with construction of many good hamlets. But the Diem government equated mechanical construction of the hamlets with "completion" of the pacification effort. The training of civil servants and cadres to administer the hamlets was also conducted during this period. The training was rushed and incomplete, and many of the Strategic Hamlet Construction Cadre were simply not prepared for the pacification effort.

During this period, the first census was conducted as an information source or data bank for population control. ID cards were issued and right-wing cells were formed from the remaining non-communist nationalist groups, most notably the Catholics, the Vietnamese National Patriotic Party (VNQDD, or Vietnam Quang Dach Dong), the Hoa Hoa, the Cao Dai, and others. Their primary function was assisting in eliminating the political structure of the NLF, termed by the US as the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI). Another group developed during the Diem regime played a leading role in politics as well as pacification. Secret cells of the new party, the Can Lao, were formed by Diem's brother in almost every aspect of the civil and military divisions of the GVN. The Can Lao developed from an old labor party in which Ngo had gained leadership. The members of the party had to swear complete loyalty to Diem and were asked to kiss his picture in initiation ceremonies. A faction of the Can Lao are believed to have been formed into the GVN Central Intelligence Service by the US CIA. The CIS to this day still is

reported to be under operational control of the CAS SAIGON.

The American government - through USAID - sent money, foodstuffs, and building materials for use by the local governments; but due to the increasing corruption in the Diem regime, most of this aid found its way onto the black market. USAID also funded the cadres and USAID Public Administration advisors set up training courses for newly elected hamlet officials. In addition, simple radio networks were installed by USAID Public Safety as part of the warning network of the Strategic Hamlet Program.

But the program failed for much the same reasons that the earlier Agroville Program failed. Corruption at every level of the Diem regime, brutal relationships between GVN officials and the population, bureaucratic rivalries in both the GVN and the US Mission, increased repression of the opposition political forces by the police and intelligence apparatus of the Diem government all led to a strengthening of the NLF and a weakening of the GVN. In the end, the failures of the Strategic Hamlet Program would lead to the overthrow and death of Ngo Dien Diem and political instability within the GVN.

THE INTERUM: 1963-66

Following the overthrow of Diem, there followed a succession of generals seizing control of the Saigon government. The US Mission was likewise thrown into turmoil; however, the American response in Vietnam became invariably predictable:

- (1) the pacification plan must be at fault. Draw up a new one.
- (2) Material, money, and personnel were insufficient. Add more of everything.
- (3) The US Mission organization is at fault. Reorganize. Dispatch a new top flight team from Washington.
- (4) The concept does not cover a sufficiently wide spectrum. Draw up new programs and dump them on an already over-burdened Vietnamese system which has neither the interest, technicians, nor capability to implement them.
- (5) The Vietnamese must do more to help themselves. Find some means of leverage, push them into reforms, give them more arms. more

equipment, more money. This last step was ultimately articulated as "Vietnamization."

The US advisory effort had grown from a modest beginning as the Mission Liaison Group and other elements of the early US Mission. Diem, before the coup that resulted in his death, had requested increased military aid many times. In 1961, the authorized number of advisors was increased from 746 to 3,400. Most arrived by June, 1962. Additionally, US tactical aircraft were provided to the newly formed Vietnamese Air Force of the RVNAF and US Army helicopter units were deployed to Vietnam to support the ARVN. The old Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) of the US Mission was reorganized as the US Military Assistance Command - Vietnam (USMACV). By the end of 1962 there were 12-15,000 US advisory and support personnel authorized to be in Vietnam. Many more were operating on a temporary duty basis. It is suspected that most of the personnel operating clandestinely were not included in the official US government figures.

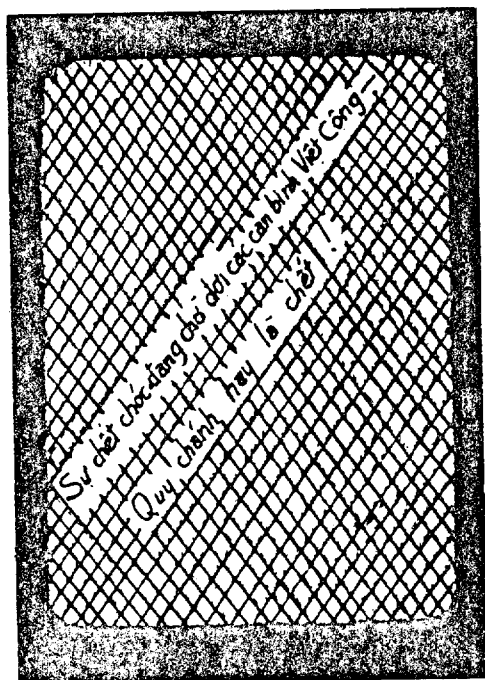
The influx of advisors during this period and later periods would not bring peace and stability to Vietnam. The increase in advisors and the pacification plans they devised, operated and then abandoned only to devise new plans, were just as ill-prepared and based on naive assumptions as the earlier attempts at pacification. The US had little or no experience with the strategy and tactics of a people's war which were employed by the NLF. Accordingly, advisory efforts failed to recognize the root causes of the Vietnamese insurgency (self determination); the huge increase in personnel in 1961-63 was a reaction to a situation that had already been seized by the NLF. Advisors were dispatched with little or no preparation and were given assignments based more on availability than on aptitude for duties. Another problem, which would continue to plague US efforts in Vietnam for many more years, was that the advisors had no time to learn or be taught that the insurgency was probably more political than military. In fact, the NLF did not maneuver for military effect as one moves on a chess board, but for the political advancement of their cause of self-determination. Sir Robert Thompson had observed earlier that, "I really don't think the military side can 9

be seperated from the economical or political." Most of the advisors ignored this observation simply because of the tradition in the US military since the founding of the Country that ranks below the General Staff do not become involved in politics. Yet many of these same advisors were working with Vietnamese counterparts who were political appointees.

During this period the provision was made for US military advisors at province level in roles other than purely military.

the early Special Forces of the US Army, but even these highly-trained men did not receive enough training before being sent to Vietnam.

MACV, the military element of the US Mission, in the early years, was thus unable to aid in the pacification programs and even after the overthrow of Diem would continue to operate in a political vacuum. The end result of which was a failure of the Army to understand that the war was political and that the Presidents of the



All arms of the US-GVN government have been extended from Saigon in an effort to convince the rural population to reject the NLF and "rally" in support of the GVN. Because it has historically represented corruption and exploitation in the minds of the Vietnamese, the GVN's only chance for support has been by intimidation. As a part of this psychological-warfare effort, the US Marines and their RVNAF counterparts in CTZ I adopted the informal SOP of providing these 'calling cards', which admonish the Vietnamese that to follow the way of the Viet Cong (or to be neutral) is to invite the same fate as the card's accompanying corpse.

The US military advisors in most of the provinces were the only advisors; the province chiefs thus did not receive economic or political advice during this period, which aided in the increased corruption and failures at pacification. Many of these advisors were part of

United States during the Vietnam conflict could only behave in their political roles rather than their military role of Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces. The President of the United States was always forced to deal with the NLF on the political level thus making a mil-

itary solution of the conflict impossible. Although many Generals urged "bombing the Vietnamese back to the stone age," this was never a realistic option for the Presidents. Although they would from time to time initiate massive bombings in Indochina, they were politically prevented from implementing plans of total innihilation; the only positive way for military victory over the NLF. General William C. Westmorland became Commander of MACV in June, 1964 and immediately institutionalised the Army's political blind spot. Until General Westmorland took command, the US advisors had operated only down to province level. General Westmorland changed this status in order:

"To help strengthen the military province and district chiefs in their roles as sector and subsector military commanders, we decided to expand the US advisory effort to district level and to increase the number of advisors at province level."

The decision to place advisors at district level (there are approximately 235 districts in Vietnam) is important not only because it substantially increased the number of advisors, but also because it placed military advisors at a level where it was unlikely that there would ever be a "balancing" US civilian advisor. This inequality was one of the failures of pacification during this period and would continue to plague pacification efforts.

By the end of 1965, US Military strength in Vietnam had reached a total of 184,000, from a 1964 year-end strength of about 23,000. What was to be called the "build-up" had begun. By December of 1968, the build-up had leveled off with a peak US forces strength of 538,000.

The wisdom of this build-up was debated by the various elements of the US government. The result was that service in US regular military units was considered more desirable and prestigious than advisory jobs. The US Army took an instant dislike to the elite Green Beret corp devised for the counter-insurgency and pacification effort by the Kennedy Administration. The Fifth Special Forces Group in Vietnam would come under more operational control of the CIA (CAS) at the expense of MACV, especially in the areas of covert warfare, cross border

operations, and political operations. The Special Forces during this time also began training of the Luc Luong Dac Biet (LLDB) - the Vietnamese Special Forces. The LLDB and their US advisors command the Civilian Irregular Defense Force (CIDG) - 45,000 specially trained warriors from the minority group tribesmen (Montagnards) from the jungle mountains. The US Special Forces, the LLDB and the CIDG all formed a vast network that was under operational control of the CIA rather than the Pentagon which controlled the RVNAF.

The other elements of the military/paramilitary forces in Vietnam such as the National Police operated under the joint advisorship of USAID Public Safety, the United States Information Agency - propaganda specialists - and CAS SAIGON. As a result, of the bureaucratic rivalries in the US Mission, the quality of advisors deteriorated as better officers sought assignments in stateside units.

CAS SAIGON initiated a program aimed at pacification during this period called People's Action Teams (PAT) - later called Province Reconnaissance Units (PRU's) - which operated under the province chiefs and was charged with a five-fold mission".

- . To win the confidence and support of the people.
- . To protect the people and their property from the Vietcong(NLF).
- . To destroy the Vietcong's 'government' and paramilitary organizations.
- . To carry out psychological and political warfare and civic action projects.
- . To gather intelligence.

The teams, who dressed in distinctive uniforms dyed purple were sometimes called "Purple People Eaters" referring not only to their clothes but to their brutal treatment of the villagers. The PAT's were paid directly by the CIA and recieved other forms of support, including intelligence. The CIA established intelligence centers in each province to coordinate the flow of pacification information between districts, provinces and operational units. The CIA also recieved and directed all the civic action programs of not only the PAT's but of other elements of the US Mission. Support for the PAT's came in the form of maintenance at both district and province headquarters of adequate ammunition stocks, replacement weapons, replacement clothing and such accoutrements. Direct cash payments were made to district and province chiefs 11

and death and funeral benefits were paid to the families of district chiefs killed in action. The CIA also maintained contact with the families of partisan team members in order to assist them in time of sickness or hardship. This was done to maintain the members moral and confidence that the local authorities were taking an active interest in himself and his family. This program failed just as other programs had failed and for the same reasons.

THE REEMPHASIS ON PACIFICATION: 1965-67

Pacification had become a major ingredient of US strategy in Vietnam by the summer of 1967. The years prior to this, however, were used in debate over the "role of pacification". The programs during this period were almost exclusively American, due to the continual upheavals in the Saigon government. Revolutionary Development (RD), as pacification came to be called during this period, grew from the original programs of 1964-65 which had little emphasis, guidance or support to an almost equal priority for the US as that given the Strategic Hamlet Program of 1962-63. The American advisory effort during this period of the build-up and the debate over pacification would lead to three major reorganizations of the US Mission in one 15 month period, each designed primarily to improve the management of the pacification programs.

The major pacification program in Vietnam, other than the PAT, from 1964-65 was the HOP TAC Program. Although many members of the US Mission to Saigon supported the program, it now appears to have been a faultily conceived and clumsily executed program. It was conceptually unsound, lacked the support of the Saigon government and intensified the disagreement within the US Mission.

HOP TAC was officially announced by out-going Ambassador Lodge at the Presidential Conference in Honolulu in February 1966, although the program had been operating haphazardly for several years. The new Deputy Ambassador William Porter was given broad new authority to run the civilian agencies of the US Mission after this conference, and, due to his efforts and the support of his superiors - Ambassador Taylor and General Westmore-

land, pacification took a new emphasis. The low priority given pacification by MACV during 1965, due to the unprecedented size of the battles in the central highlands and the coast, the air war intensifying and moving northward towards Hanoi and the continual state of disarray in the Saigon government, was completely reversed during this period.

The HOP TAC program was designed to put whatever resources are required into the area surrounding Saigon to pacify it." First called PICA (Pacification Intensification Capital Area) and then redesignated HOP TAC by its American designers, the program was to incorporate the old familiar pacification programs of relocation, militia training and self-help.

So unsuccessful was HOP TAC that during its life span the NLF was able to organize a regiment in the Saigon area. MACV was forced by the failure of HOP TAC to commit three US Infantry battalions in late 1966 to protect Saigon, as part of Operation Fairfax.

In the meantime, the ARVN were defeated in a major battle at Binh Gia near Saigon which marked the nadir of the ARVN as a fighting force and they have never been able to recover. The NLF grew in strength and destroyed what remained of pacification in the countryside and many hamlets became what the Americans called Viet Cong Combat Hamlets.

With the ARVN becoming more and more an ineffective fighting force the US committed American Ground Forces in 1965. First ashore were the Marines, as usual, at Da Nang. The Marines, under General Lewis W. Walt, quickly discovered that the toughest war for them was the war in the villages behind them near Da Nang Air Base rather than against the main force of the NLF, which had retreated to the hills to build up.

In the first twelve months of the Marines landing in March of 1965, the Marines turned toward support of the on-going rural construction program (pacification). General Walt emphasized that the main opposition was the "Viet Cong guerilla intermingling with the population." The Marines decided to emphasize destruction of the VCI, which led them into a number of conflicts with the "body-count" orientated MACV under General Westmoreland.

The Marines developed by trial and error three pacification techniques as they became the first service in the US Armed Forces to support pacification. The first of these programs was the use of Kit Carson Scouts. The Kit Carson Program - aptly named after the advisor to the old US Calvary who placed a reward for Navaho scalps in the Southwestern US - integrated former members of the Viet Cong (NLF) into US Marine units as guides, lead scouts and intelligence personnel. The program was praised by most observers at the time, although many of the scouts maintained double loyalties. The Kit Carson Scouts were just another addition to the growing list of paramilitary units in Vietnam under US control.

The second pacification program of the Marines was the County Fair, which was essentially the joint Marine/ARVN tactic of occupying and clearing a hamlet of the NLF structure. The third tactic was the use of the Combined Action Platoon which joined a Marine rifle squad with a platoon of RF/PF which the Marines called "Ruff/Puffs".

The NLF resisted the Marine efforts. Every man, woman and child in the hamlets was mobilized to impede the Marines and keep them out of the hamlets. The Marines kept up pressure on the areas which belonged to the NLF since the fall of Dien Bien Phu, but were unable to irradiate the NLF presence. The NLF, in turn, during this period began to understand the long range implication of pacification.

In the late summer of 1966, the DRV increased the supply of aid to the NLF coming down the Ho Chi Minh Trail or across the DMZ. With the increased aid and the defeat of the ARVN, the NLF forces were able to concentrate on the Marines. This increase in activity forced the Marines out of their pacification roles and back into larger more conventional units. As pacification declined, the NLF presence at the hamlet level moved back into their old positions to organize for continued resistance to the US/GVN pacification programs.

With the defeat of the HOP TAC and the US government being forced to commit infantry troops in Operation Fairfax and with the defeat of the ARVN, and the Marines in trouble, the US Mission was reorganized, the first of three major reorganizations to occur during the next 15 months. After the Presidential Con-

ference with leaders of the GVN in Honolulu, Deputy Ambassador Porter was put in direct charge of the civilian agencies involved with pacification. Porter never received the full support of Ambassador Lodge, who had never been fully in favor of the reorganization. Handicapped from the start, Porter was unable to accomplish as much as Washington hoped he would.

Meanwhile in Washington, President Johnson appointed Robert W. Komer to be his Special Assistant on non-military activities in Vietnam. Komer pushed the ideas of pacification hard, and became the first senior US official, with apparently ready access to the President, who put forward the pro-pacification position consistently in high level meetings of the US government. During the summer of 1966, Komer applied great pressure to both the US Mission and the Washington agencies with a series of cables and visits to Vietnam, often using the President's name. For this he earned the nickname of "Blowtorch" from Ambassador Lodge.

Komer and Porter initiated a series of Task Forces and Study Groups to produce papers that gave a better rationale and strategy to pacification. These included the US Army study called PROVN, the Priorities Task Force in Saigon and the Roles and Missions Study Groups in Saigon. The effect of this was to force MACV under General Westmoreland to take more interest in pacification. Finally Westmoreland, who in January of 1966 would not even mention pacification in his year-end report, prepared a new long range strategy which emphasized pacification.

The US Mission and agencies in Washington then began heated debate to decide whether or not one single manager should be appointed to direct pacification in Vietnam. The result was another Presidential conference, this time in Manila.

At this conference for the first time the GVN committed itself to the pacification effort now called Revolutionary Development (RD). The President directed Porter to form a new organization within the US Mission which would incorporate the various pacification programs of the different mission elements - USIS, CAS, and AID. The organization was called the Office of Civil Operations (OCO). The OCO was plagued from the beginning. Por-



Phụng - Hoàng

ĐÂY, NHỮNG CÁN BỘ CÔNG SẢN MÀ
CHIẾN DỊCH PHỤNG HOÀNG ĐANG TRUY NÃ



PHAN VĂN MÂM tự
MƯỜI THÀNH



TRẦN VĂN ĐÔNG tự
HÙNG



NGUYỄN VĂN MINH tự



MAI VĂN TỨC
sinh năm 1931

sinh năm 1908

Phó Ban Binh Vn

Xã An Thái Trung

Quận Giáo Đức

sinh năm 1930

Approved For Release 2004/09/28 : CIA-RDP88-01314R000100370023-0

Xã An Thái Trung

Quận Giáo Đức

sinh năm 1937

Tổng Ban Quân Sự

Xã An Thái Trung

Quận Giáo Đức

Cán sự Nông Hoi

Ấp An Nhơn

Xã An Hữu

Quận Giáo Đức

Đồng bào thân mến,

Nếu đồng bào biết nơi ẩn trốn của các cán bộ Công Sản trên đây. yêu cầu thông báo cho nhân viên Cảnh Sát Quốc Gia hoặc Chánh quyền và Quân đội VNCH gần nhất. Đồng bào sẽ được tưởng thưởng và tên tuổi đồng bào sẽ được giữ kín.

Cùng các ban cán bộ Công-Sản

Các ban không thể lẫn trốn mãi được vì mọi người đã nhận diện các ban.

Các ban hãy ra hội chánh để hưởng sự khoan hồng của Chánh Phủ. Các ban sẽ được tiếp đón niềm nở và đối xử tử tế.

**ỦY BAN PHUNG HOÀNG
TỈNH ĐỊNH TƯỚNG**

CC-703-70

US/GVN USE OF TORTURE: THE PAIN OF DEFACTO POLICY

One of the side products of the US intervention was the formation of defacto operating policies concerning the conduct of the war. Among these defacto policies was an "understanding" on the use of torture to elicit information from civilian detainees and prisoners of war. The Phoenix Program was no exception to this standard operating procedure, the use of torture by both military and civilian representatives of the US and Saigon government is documented in several sources.

From these existing sources, a fairly complete analysis of the methods of torture can be made. Some of the torture is new, relying on the misuse and abuse of modern technology. Other methods of torture are as old as the history of repression. All of them are cruel beyond the words used to describe them.

RAPE: The use of rape as a torture technique has taken four distinct forms in Vietnam. The first technique is the threat of rape as an intimidation factor. Second is the actual rape by a man or group of men. Third is rape through the use of live eels and snakes. Fourth is rape through the use of hard objects. Rape is often followed by murder.

ELECTRICAL SHOCK: The use of portable generators, field telephones, jeep batteries and other sources of electrical energy to shock and burn victims has been used all classifications of prisoners and detainees. The electrical wires were applied to sensitive areas of the body, in particular the genital areas, breasts and tongue, and increasing amounts of voltage are regulated to the person. This method is sometimes referred to as the "Bell Telephone Hour" or "ringing up" the victim. The use of this torture has produced death by dehydration, shock, cardiac arrest and internal bleeding.

WATER TORTURE: Water is forced down the victim's throat until he or she gags and loses consciousness. This is done by the use of hoses or by dunking the victim's head into a river, paddy or vat of water. If the victim survives this torture, the use of water usually damages the inner ear, causing temporary or permanent loss balance. If the water is

from a putrified source, the victim runs the chance of contracting disease.

HANGING FROM CEILING: This form of torture is especially popular in the interrogations centers of Saigon. Most Saigon students who have reported torture have told of being hung from a hook in the ceiling, ropes trussed around the upper arms and draped over the hook. The victim, once hung in this fashion, is then subjected to a variety of beatings, or is spun continually in a circle in an attempt to produce feelings of nausea, dizziness and vomiting.

BEATINGS: Even the oldest form of torture, physical beating, had taken new forms under US assistance. In addition to the use of rubber hoses, whips, fists and pistol whippings, the new techniques of counter-insurgency brought in the use of "police" dogs used to bite victims, these victims being dragged behind jeeps and armored personnel carriers, and the scientific application of blows as not to leave marks.

INCARCERATION: The physical conditions that constituted jail or prison for suspected NLF or North Vietnamese cadre, sympathizers, supporters or family members of the above is in itself a form of torture. The "tiger cages" and "cow cages" used by the Saigon government have been built by both the French and US governments. In addition, former US military personnel have testified as to the use of exposure to the elements as a form of torture. Barbed wire cages, eight feet long by three feet wide by two feet high were used to hold prisoners captured by Special Forces units. If the prisoner moved to relieve the pain caused by the barbs digging into his or her flesh, new wounds were opened by the movement.

EXECUTION: The killing of prisoners as an end to torture is an accepted fact. As one Vietnam veteran has publically stated, "...Prisoners I treated this way (tortured) were executed at the end because there was no way that we could take them into any medical aid and say, 'This dude fell down some steps or something...' (John Drolshagen, former member of the 635th Military Intelligence Detachment, Vietnam)

In addition, interrogation often took the form of "airborne sessions." Congress has taken testimony from former US Intelligence personnel who witnessed this technique and the resultant deaths of detainees who were flung from helicopters in an attempt to intimidate other detainees to produce desired information.

These descriptions do not constitute a full documentation of the torture techniques used in South Vietnam. Other forms of torture are devised and refined on a daily basis, restricted only by the number of victims with which to experiment. The accounts of prisoners released from GVN prisons shows that often US personnel were present or directed the torture.

SOURCES: The documentation of the use of torture by both the US and GVN forces can be found in many sources. The information used in this instance has come from : *Congressional Record*, March 1, 1971, remarks by Cong. Ronald Dellums; *Congressional Record*, April 6 & 7, 1971, extension of remarks by Sen. Mark Hatfield; *Report of the US Mission on Repression in South Vietnam*, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Nyack, NY, 1971; *The Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, Vintage Press, 1972; *The Winter Soldier Investigation*, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Beacon Press, 1972; *Saigon, USA*, Alfred Hassler, Robert Baron, 1970; *Hosages of War*, Don Luce and Holmes Brown, Indochina Resource Center, 1973; and various press reports on file with CARIC.



The "rope trick" (as described by American POW's) has been applied to this man by GVN soldiers. After this photo was taken, he and 8 others were executed without trial. Photo by Doug Hostetter.

ter was unable, due to other duties, to devote full time to the program although he did appoint several Regional Deputies who would influence pacification for many more years including John Paul Vann, the controversial former MACV advisor who would become the highest ranking US civilian killed in the war.

But the rivalries between the different US agencies were too strong for OCO to accomplish much. At another Presidential conference, in Guam in March of 1967, the President scrapped OCO and then reorganized the US Mission. Ellsworth Bunker was appointed Ambassador. General Westmoreland was replaced by General Creighton Abrams and Komer was sent to Saigon to take charge of the program.

ization of OCO into the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) which was placed under MACV with Komer as its first director.

CORDS would continue until the cease fire to be the guiding agency with in the US Mission dealing with pacification and thus, although it was officially under MACV, its importance was equal to that of the military. In fact, pacification would often be the sole justification for many of the ground operations of MACV over the next years of the American involvement in Vietnam.

Komer introduced the computer to pacification and established many automatic data processing (ADP) programs for CORDS. One of these ADP programs was the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) which listed

its relative degree of control by the GVN or the NLF. The HES figures always over-estimated the strength of GVN control which led to criticism of the program and of Komer from the US agencies, who believed that statistics are not meaningful measures of political attitudes. Komer also instituted ADP programs for national census.

The census which would be called the Family Census Program registered all pertinent data on members of a particular family. A group photo of the entire family was placed in the census dossier. US advisors emphasized that it was vitally important for the NP to obtain information concerning families since "This can be useful in exploiting family sentiment to obtain his arrest..."

Almost every aspect of Vietnamese life would eventually be programmed into the US computers. The overall program would eventually be called the Resources Control Program (RCP). The program was designed to "regulate the movement of people and goods" and "restrict the flow of information and supplies." The RCP was made available to all GVN and US agencies participating in pacification.

One of the sub-programs under the RCP would become the National Identification Registration Program (NIRP) which aimed to register and identify everyone over 15 years of age. The US Federal Bureau of Investigation loaned men and equipment to operate the NIRP. In every person's dossier in the data bank was a photograph, fingerprints of both hands, a description of the person and biographic data including political opinions, personal feelings

about the GVN cadres, wealth, family status and any hearsay or reputation offered by friends, relatives or informers. The NIRP succeeded in registering nearly everyone in south Vietnam except the NLF, who eluded the census takers.

Pacification or Revolutionary Development became the leading edge of pacification efforts and expanded the control of the GVN. The first efforts of RD were designed to establish economic development as well as involve more hamlets in the GVN. The program relied more and more on technology and the presence

sence of US troops which further separated the Saigon government from the rural communities.

During this period the NP were reorganized by CORDS advisors. Eventually under the Thieu regime the NP would become the primary operational arm of pacification. A school was established near the Vietnamese resort of Vung Tau and designated the National Training Center. Here Vietnamese in the NP were trained by US advisors in the techniques of counter-insurgency including electronic bugging techniques, interrogation including torture, infiltration and assassination. The courses were thinly disguised in the Public Safety rhetoric of "law and order" long since established in the pacification effort in Vietnam.

The Directorate General of the NP was established on June 27, 1962, uniting representatives of the various police agencies into one single governing body for police efforts and was placed under the Ministry of the Interior of the GVN. From a force level of 22,000 in mid-1964 the NP jumped to 94,000 by the end of 1968, and would climb to over 120,000 by 1972.

Each Corps Tactical Zone, the military regions of south Vietnam, were assigned a police directorate and police were placed at every level in the provinces. In Saigon, a Metropolitan Police Directorate was formed and assigned much the same duties as the NP in the provinces. The influx of millions of refugees into Saigon during the next years severely taxed the SMPD and added to the ineffectiveness in maintaining law and order; they had to be supported many times by the ARVN.

In addition to the regular police, who were called "White Mice" by the US troops, the Marine Police and the National Police Field Force (NPFF) were formed. The Marine Police were assigned pacification duties along the rivers and streams, primarily in the delta. The NPFF became a paramilitary force primarily assigned to eliminating the NLF political structure in the rural area. The NPFF would number over 25,000 by 1972. The NPFF like all branches of the NP was under operational control by CORDS.

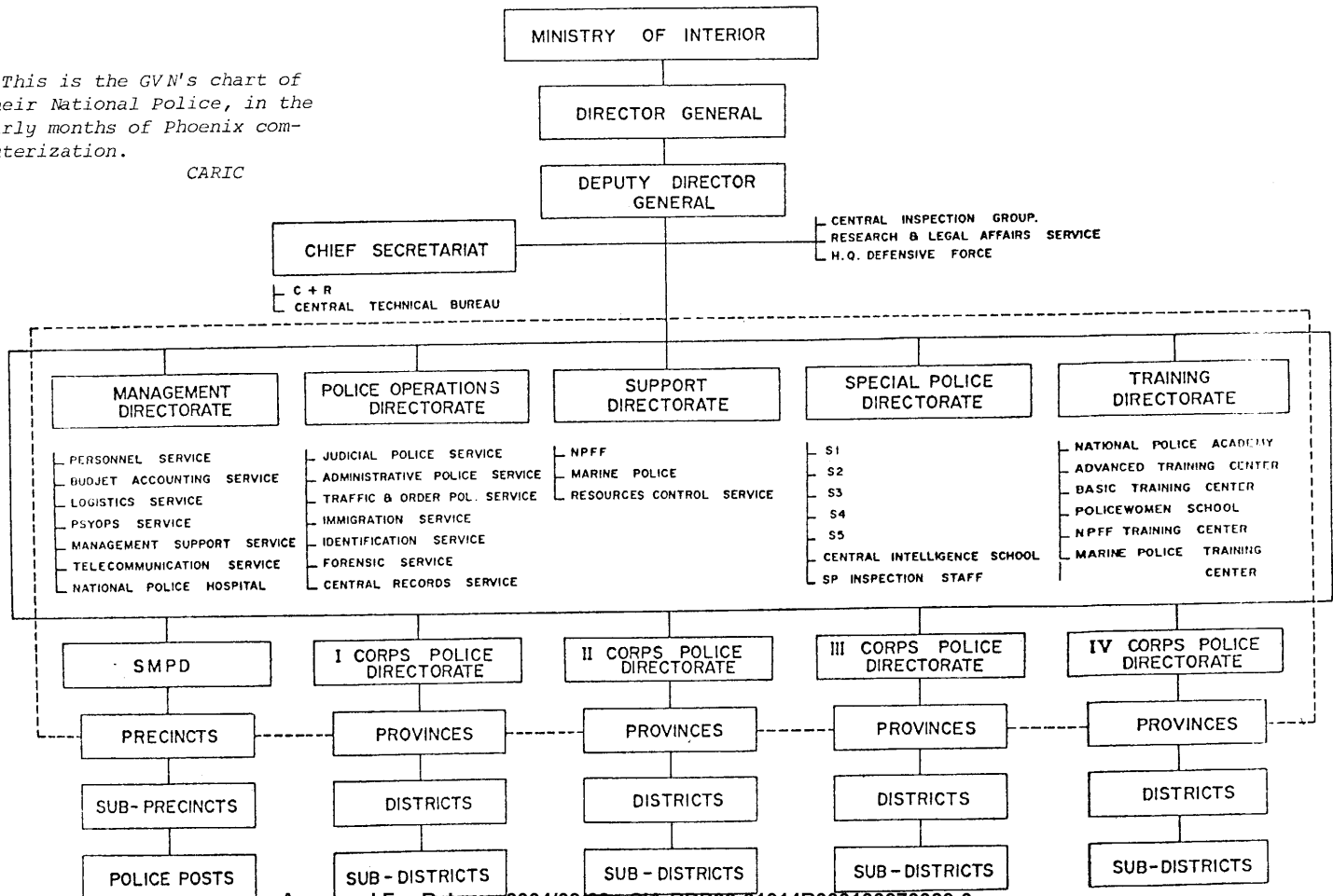
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No. 176 - SL / NV
12 - 26 - 1968

ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE NATIONAL POLICE OF VIETNAM

19

This is the GVN's chart of their National Police, in the early months of Phoenix computerization.

CARIC



CORDS advisors created another directorate within the NP, the Special Police branch, responsible for eliminating NLF cadre and repressing all forms of dissent in south Vietnam. They are well known for their practices of infiltrating opposition political groups and torturing arrested suspects.

RD as conceived by the US and programmed for implementation by the GVN differed little from the earlier Strategic Hamlet Program. The main differences being that RD had the use of more troops, more planning, more coordination, more support and more money than any of the earlier efforts. But RD, like the programs before it, failed. When the NLF launched their Tet offensive in 1968, the US and GVN were forced to divert all their pacification resources to recovery of lost positions and the RD program came to an end.

In 1969, under the Thieu regime, a new plan for pacification was launched that was of course quite similar to previous attempts, except that by now pacification was considered an art and both the US and the GVN had many experts on the subject. However, many of these experts were military men who kept the same anti-political bias that helped destroy the programs of earlier years. This along with the ever-increasing corruption in the Saigon government, predetermined the ultimate failure of all pacification efforts.

The 1969 program called for eight different programs all incorporating the different attempts made in the past. The first step was to provide territorial security. This involved the military occupation activities of the RVNAF, the NP, the RD cadres, the People's Self Defense Force, and the FWMAF composed of the troops of the US and its allies.

The second part of the program involved the establishing of local government in the villages. This activity was organized by the RD cadre. The third part of the program, organizing People's Self Defense Forces was also the responsibility of the RD cadre.

The fourth program was the "Chieu Hoi" or Open Arms program which invited elements of the NLF to defect to the GVN. Hoi Chanh or "ralliers" were processed at Chieu Hoi Centers in each province

under the guidance of the CORDS Chieu Hoi Directorate. The Hoi Chanh after being processed, interrogated, and politically indoctrinated were either given vocational training, or immediately transferred to either civilian employment, the ARVN, the Kit Carson Scout program or formed into Armed Propaganda Teams. The APT's were charged with bringing in more Hoi Chanh and worked under the PSYOPS (psychological operations) committees in each province.

The 1969 Pacification Campaign also called for the intensification of propaganda on all levels and the stimulation of the rural economy. The biggest problem of the campaign was the number of refugees which were increasing due to the increased use of American air power and the reduction of these refugees was of prime concern to the GVN.

The final program of the 1969 campaign called for the elimination of the VCI. The program became known as Phung Hoang or Phoenix. During the earlier Strategic Hamlet program each province was given a different codename for pacification efforts. In Quang Nai province, south of Da Nang, the program was called Phung Hoang or Royal Phoenix. The name would eventually become the name for the overall effort to eliminate the VCI.

Phoenix became official in June, 1968, but actually this is just the date the program was fed into the computers. Phoenix had been operating country-wide for some time before this computerization. When all other pacification programs were failing, the US Mission escalated the tactics of pacification to total war on the NLF infrastructure. This came to involve mass imprisonment, torture and assassination.

In each province the Province Chief established a Province Phung Hoang Committee or Province Security Committee (PSC). The committee had the power of life and death over everyone in the province. The PSC controlled the NPFF and the SP who maintained Province Interrogation Centers (PIC's) were interrogation came to mean torture. The PSC also control the RD cadre, the PSDF, the APT's the RF/PF and the Province Reconnaissance Units (PRU's). The Phung Hoang Committee also maintains the PIOCC's and the DIOCC's which keep all the dossiers on

individuals in Vietnam. The DIOCC's are actually the operational centers for many Phoenix operations.

In every province and in every district the GVN Phung Hoang structure was paralleled by an US Phoenix structure. Before 1970, the CORDS directorate was dominated by the CIA but as the military gained more control over pacification the program came to be operated by Military Intelligence of the US Army. The Phoenix coordinators made up a part of the Advisory Teams in every province and district and came to be such a special function that the Army created a Phoenix Career Program to hold on to experienced Phoenix operatives.

By 1972, even Phoenix was failing to achieve the goals of pacification. The program was corrupted into a mass terrorist program highly comparable to the mass terrorist campaign conducted by the German Third Reich against dissenters and minority groups.

When the NLF launched their successful offensive in October of 1972, they dismantled all of the US pacification efforts in the rural countryside and forced the US to sign the cease fire and withdraw US ground forces from Vietnam.

After the cease-fire, pacification continued, however. CORDS was redesignated the Redevelopment and Relocation Program and is operated by the Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Field Operations, George D. Jacobson who will work under the new Ambassador Graham Martin when Bunker leaves. This post of SAAFFO will continue to advise the Phoenix program which has been renamed F-6. Although many former CORDS advisors are staying on in Vietnam - including Jacobson who was the former Deputy COMUSMACV for CORDS - most agencies of the US government are shying away from SAAFFO and F-6 due to the stigma of the Phoenix assassination program. Many more former Viet Nam "hands" are convinced that pacification is doomed in Vietnam and that the GVN will collapse and that the PRG will ascend to power in Saigon. In the mean time the Thieu regime is continuing the program of mass arrest, torture and assassination begun under Phoenix with the aid of the new SAAFFO.

Of course any examination of a tax-supported public program must include a close look at not only the laws and directives which constitute the authority for its execution, but also as close a look as can be had at how these regulations are actually carried out "in the field". Throughout the history of US involvement in Vietnam, one of the main weaknesses in checking the growth of ill-conceived policies has been the inability or unwillingness of those charged with investigating or reporting -- be they Congressional or press -- to find mobility beyond Saigon. This remains as large a problem today as it was five years ago. However, due to the fact that the Phoenix program -- officially presented as a responsible public safety program -- has been and remains a systematic murder program, much more information has come to light on it and its successor program "F-6" than would have if these had not become indiscriminate. Over the last five years, enough honest people have been sufficiently repulsed with what they saw in Phoenix and now F-6 as to have retained enough documentation for an in-depth study of what the US has spent billions of dollars to conceive, execute in the name of public safety, and then deny in the name of national security.

FROM PHUNG HOANG TO PHOENIX

Prior to the spring of 1968, US advisors had been working hard with their GVN counterparts to establish a list of those who were active with the NLF and who were vulnerable to assassination. The thought was to make their elimination as visible as possible to the general population and therefore create a popular feeling of ubiquity by the Saigon government. The symbol chosen for the Phung Hoang program -- translated "royal phoenix" -- was the mythological phoenix bird, designed to convey the psychological warfare message that the Saigon government was all-present. This sad practice of intimidation by proxy, while it probably looked good on paper at the US embassy and the presidential palace, had the counterproductive effect in the provinces of instilling fear and hate for the GVN in the hearts and minds

of an over-taxed and exploited rural population. In addition, added to the history of illegitimate rule of the GVN over decades of abuse of power, the crudity of the Phung Hoang assassination program became one of the most effective recruiting devices for the NLF. In the provinces such as Quang Ngai (where the village of My Lai is located), where the NLF has had strong support, the Saigon arm of Phung Hoang had long been identified. But in February of 1968, the political success of the NLF's TET offensive changed Saigon's approach to political assassination and the other war. Because the TET offensive demonstrated the NLF's ubiquity much beyond US-GVN estimates, the decision was made to centralize all lists of NLF sympathizers for a systematic approach.

Based on the assumption that NLF or VC sympathizers were in the great minority and only needed to be intimidated to be dealt with, the concept was developed -- much in the tradition of French and Japanese colonial techniques -- that the "VC infrastructure" (VCI), if neutralized according to the plan, would be the key to demoralizing support of the NLF. This approach allowed Saigon to continue the myth that the menace of the opposition would go away if only dealt with severely enough. Therefore, in the spring of 1968, freshly reeling from the shock of the first spring offensive, directives were issued by the desperate Saigon government to all security organizations within the GVN that political information was to be channelled from all sources to the local Phoenix Coordinator. In turn, the people responsible for collecting intelligence (both military and civilian) took as one of their main priorities the collection of long lists of names which were submitted by their agent nets (South Vietnamese civilians who were reporting their neighbors for alleged political variation). Under the covers and budgeting of USAID, CORDS, pacification survey, public employment and other supposedly benevolent agencies, Phoenix representatives collected and submitted tens of thousands of names of suspected NLF sympathizers. Two major problems were immediately apparent. First, the South Vietnamese who were used as neighborhood spies throughout the country were found to be reporting their own personal enemies

(such as creditors and subjects of family feuds) for liquidation. The overload and overlapping of names became quickly apparent. In a rush effort to neutralize the growing NLF threat to Saigon, whole military operations were mounted on the basis of Phoenix intelligence information. One example of this SOP in March of 1968 is Operation Barker, which is remembered as the My Lai massacre. This is an example of how Phoenix information was used to justify the slaughter of whole hamlets. In his account of how the My Lai story was obscured, Seymour Hersh explains the ludicrous process which resulted in the massacre of an entire hamlet.

"Who told Task Force Barker that all civilians in the hamlet of My Lai 4 would magically disappear -- on their way to market -- shortly after 7 A.M. on March 16?"

"Where did the task force receive information stating that 400 members of the 48th Viet Cong Battalion would be in Son My village on March 16?"

"These two questions remained unanswered throughout the lengthy hearings into the My Lai 4 massacre. Witnesses were consistently asked if they could cite any documents or individuals who provided such information; the answers were invariably vague. 'No, sir, I cannot cite any document,' Captain Kotouc said confusedly in response to one such question, 'but it was through interrogation of people I had talked to. This was always -- this was the part we were trying to figure out, how they moved in the area. They all came and went about the same time... If I recall, part of it (the intelligence) came from Colonel Barker. Information, I think, he received from his contacts or somewhere like that. It is very difficult for me to pin it down.'"

"Other witnesses testified that the task force worked very closely with Major David C. Gavin, the senior American advisor to the Vietnamese at Son Tinh, one of the six administrative districts of Quang Ngai Province... Gavin and Barker conferred a number of times before the March 16 operation, but Gavin, as he testified, was not the originator of much fresh intelligence. His district headquarters was